

SANITARY COMMISSION.

No. 52.

INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL INSPECTORS

CONCERNING

CERTAIN CAMPAIGN DUTIES.

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSION,
WASHINGTON, *December 1st, 1862.*

To each General Inspector of the Sanitary Commission.

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO SUMMARY INSPECTIONS AND THE USE OF FORM C.

SIR: In Doc. No. 51 you have been instructed as to the proper method of procedure when engaged in visiting troops likely to be for some time at rest in camp. Accompanying these instructions you have received a series of inquiries incorporated in a form, (A,) which you were requested to reply to as minutely as possible. This form of return is applicable only to the inspection of troops at rest. During an active campaign it will be, as a general rule, impracticable to continue these inspections; and another form of return has been prepared, which, while it is of a summary character, yet conforms in its chief points to the general divisions of the more minute return.

A large portion of the army has already been inspected according to Form A, and it is very desirable that every regiment should receive one such thorough inspection. A list of those regiments which have been so inspected will be furnished you. Their minute inspection need not be re-

peated, but it is important that their sanitary history should be continued by the more summary inspection of Form C.

When from circumstances you are unable to use the more formal return in regiments hitherto not inspected, you will collect all the information you can by the more condensed Form C, taking advantage, however, of the first good opportunity to secure an inspection by Form A.

The points to be investigated are divided first into two heads—those of observation and those of inquiry, and the latter are again sub-divided into inquiries made of the Surgeon and those addressed to other officers of the regiment.

An abstract has been made of these inquiries, arranged according to these divisions, in the form of memoranda, on three slips, to be attached for reference, while inspecting, to the cover of a note book. These memoranda suggest every point of investigation included in the return, the numerals attached indicating the inquiries to which they refer. Notes of inspection can be immediately entered under the appropriate numeral, the return being at once filled up from these notes by yourself or your assistant, receiving in the latter case your revision and signature before being sent to this office. These returns should be sent to the office immediately upon being filled up.

Through your professional relations to the surgeon, you will generally be able to derive full information concerning the condition of the hospital, its supply, and the measure of sickness in camp; and thus, even when visits to other officers are undesirable, or necessarily brief, you should seek, if possible, to become through him so well informed on these points that you may answer minutely the inquiries of the General Divisions XIX and XX.

You should also give especial attention to conditions and circumstances affecting discipline, indicating, when it may be in your power, instances where its neglect has induced sickness or notably impaired the effective power of a regiment for active operations in the field.

In general, you will be guided by the spirit of the fuller instructions heretofore given you, (Doc. 51;) a more or less

literal conformity thereto being left to your judgment, to be determined by existing circumstances.

In rendering your "return" of inspection you are not to be limited to accurate replies to the queries of Form C, but may in addition approximate as nearly as you can to the more complete Form A.

In order to procure a continuous sanitary history of the army in the field, summary inspections should be made of every regiment, under all circumstances, at least once a quarter, and monthly if convenient. Regiments should be *visited* more frequently, and it should be your aim to survey the whole field of your duties, and confer with every surgeon at least weekly.

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO WEEKLY REPORTS.

That the central offices may be kept well informed of all the operations of the Commission through its inspectors and their assistants, Inspectors will hereafter be required to prepare a general weekly report, which is to be sent punctually to the office of the Commission at Louisville or Washington. In this report you will designate the regiments and hospitals which you have visited, or with whose officers you have conferred on matters of their duty, and, so far as convenient, whatever you have observed or done of interest with reference to each. You will also speak of the condition of the troops generally under your observation, especially of changes which have occurred, or are occurring, in their sanitary condition; of the condition of hospitals, regimental and general, their deficiencies and the causes of these, the condition and business of the relief station or stations, (whether fixed, floating or ambulatory,) under your superintendence, especially stating, in a concise form, (suitable for publication,) the amount of each sort of goods issued to the hospitals, (with names of surgeons,) corps or individuals relieved, with any remarks or explanations, which may be required to satisfy contributors of goods that they are issued in accordance with the obligations of the Commission to the public, together with any other observations which will be likely to aid the

Commission and its officers in understanding the condition and wants of the army.

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO REPORTS ABOUT SUPPLIES.

Special information as to the deficiencies of the relief station, with instructions as to their supply, and the prospective demand will be made to the depot from which supplies are drawn, whether this be in charge of a Secretary or of another officer of the Commission; all such information is to be transmitted to the Central Office from the Depot at frequent intervals, with reports from the officer in charge as to supplies in hand and wanted, the prospective demand, &c.

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO HISTORICAL REPORTS OF REGIMENTS.

It is proposed to add to the records of the Commission a sketch of the history of all the regiments in the service, especially of their sanitary and medical history. This is not to interfere with the more important duty of inspections, but is to be procured as other engagements allow. In doing your part toward the realization of this purpose, you will please make special inquiry with regard to the epidemics, prolonged encampments, severe fatigue duties, marchings, forced or otherwise, engagements with the enemy, and pitched battles, with the peculiar circumstances attending each, since the regiment entered service up to the period of the first inspection by Form C. Thereafter the historical record will refer only to the period intervening between the dates of inspection.

Your obedient servant,

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,
General Secretary.